



Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

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RELAY MISSOURI for Hearing and Speech Impaired 1-800-735-2966 VOICE 1-800-735-2466

Peter Lyskowski
Acting Director



Jeremiah W. (Jay) Nixon
Governor

August 3, 2016

«DistrictName»
«DistAdminTitle» «DistAdminFName» «DistAdminLName»
«DistrictAddress»
«DistrictCity», MO «DistrictZip»

Dear «DistAdminTitle» «DistAdminLName»:

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR) are sending this letter to provide school administrators simple recommended preventative practices to reduce potential lead exposures to students and staff at your facilities. These include flushing taps and drinking water fountains that have not been in use for an extended time and may contain lead from within the facility's own water system.

There is no safe level of lead in the body. Even low blood lead levels in children are associated with intellectual losses, higher rates of neurobehavioral disorders such as hyperactivity and attention deficits, and poor academic achievement. Because the developmental effects of lead toxicity may be permanent, prevention of lead exposure is key to assuring our children the best chance at success in school and in life.

Drinking water supplied by public water systems in Missouri is monitored for lead under state and federal regulation to ensure safety. Public water systems are tested in a variety of ways, including testing in the distribution system at sites considered to be worst case scenarios. The overall compliance rate of Missouri public water systems is good.

Nevertheless, even when public water systems supply consistently safe drinking water to end users' connections, such as school facilities, lead within the facility's own pipes or fixtures can leach into the drinking water. This effect can accumulate lead to high levels when water sits stagnant in pipes, fixtures, or drinking water fountains for an extended period of time, such as when buildings or facilities are not in use during summer months or spring break. This type of leaching is not a concern when a water source is used regularly, so flushing is not necessary unless the water has been unused for some time. Although exposure to lead from stagnant water lines that have *not* been flushed may not be a routine source of lead exposure for any particular individual, some relatively simple steps can eliminate this potential source for all.

To minimize the potential for students and staff at your school being exposed to lead in drinking water, DHSS and DNR recommend you consider implementing these preventative tips:

www.health.mo.gov

Healthy Missourians for life.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services will be the leader in promoting, protecting and partnering for health.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER: Services provided on a nondiscriminatory basis.

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- Thoroughly flush all water lines providing water for drinking or for cooking, such as water fountains and kitchen sinks, before the start of the school year. Preferably this should be done in the days immediately prior to students' return to the facility. Flushing should be performed for 5 to 10 minutes to insure lead levels are minimized.
- Flush taps that are not used regularly before using them as water sources for drinking or cooking. Make it a standard daily practice to run the water from kitchen taps used for cooking for 15 to 30 seconds, or until the water becomes cold and reaches a steady temperature, especially if the water has not been used for several hours.
- Use the cold water tap for drinking and/or cooking and heat water up as needed. Heating water does not remove lead, but water in hot water lines may contain more lead.

In summary, lead can leach from pipes or fixtures within the school into drinking water and, when the water system is not used for a period of time, the lead can accumulate to high levels. Flushing the water lines eliminates any potentially lead-impacted water and the chance of lead ingestion by students and staff.

Thank you for your consideration of these preventative recommendations. Primary prevention is the main focus of reducing lead poisoning for both children and adults. If you have further questions about the health effects of lead or lead poisoning prevention tips, please do not hesitate to contact the DHSS Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at (573) 751-6102.

If you have questions about the drinking water supplied to your facility(ies), you should contact your public water system, or you can contact the DNR Public Drinking Water Branch, at (573) 751-1300.

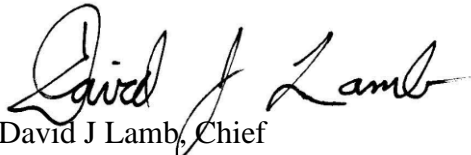
Sincerely,

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Garoutte", with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Jonathan Garoutte, Chief
Bureau of Environmental Epidemiology

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David J. Lamb", with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

David J Lamb, Chief
Public Drinking Water Branch

JG/DL/vmp